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Godel Tells of Taking \$18,000 to Asia And Starting Anti-Guerrilla Center

By Peter S. Diggins

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William H. Godel testified yesterday that the Government money he is accused of embezzling was spent in establishing a training center for anti-guerrilla warfare in South Viet-Nam.

"I've never knowingly taken any of the Government's money except for official purposes," Godel, a former Pentagon official, said as he took the stand on the fifth day of his trial in Alexandria Federal Court on embezzlement and conspiracy charges.

In early 1961, the National Security Council approved a recommendation by Godel for establishment of "a facility in Asia leading to the study of better ways to establish anti-guerrilla warfare" in the

jungles of South Viet-Nam, the defendant said.

In June, 1961, Godel left for Viet-Nam with about \$18,000 to set up the center, he testified, about \$5000 in personal funds and the remainder in Government money.

Godel estimated that he spent about \$10,000 for nine items in connection with the Viet-Nam trip and used some of the remaining money on later journeys.

During cross-examination Assistant U.S. Attorney Plato Caehris read statements by Godel at earlier investigations in which the defendant said he doubted he would have carried a sum as large as \$18,000 to Viet-Nam.

When asked to reconcile those statements with his testimony, Godel replied that since the earlier investigation,

"I have been able to reconstruct the events and refresh my mind."

Godel also testified concerning a 1960 trip taken by his wife to the South Pacific and Asia for which she received per diem expenses. Godel said she was invited to make the trip by the governments of Thailand and Australia and accompanied him to several official functions.

Before Godel began his testimony, Federal Judge Owen R. Lewis dismissed a false claim indictment against another former Pentagon official on trial with Godel, John A. Wylie. Wylie is charged with being co-conspirator with Godel.

The trial will continue at 10 a.m. Monday in Federal Court.